

90-DAY DEVOTIONAL FOR TEEN GUYS



NO MORE EXCUSES

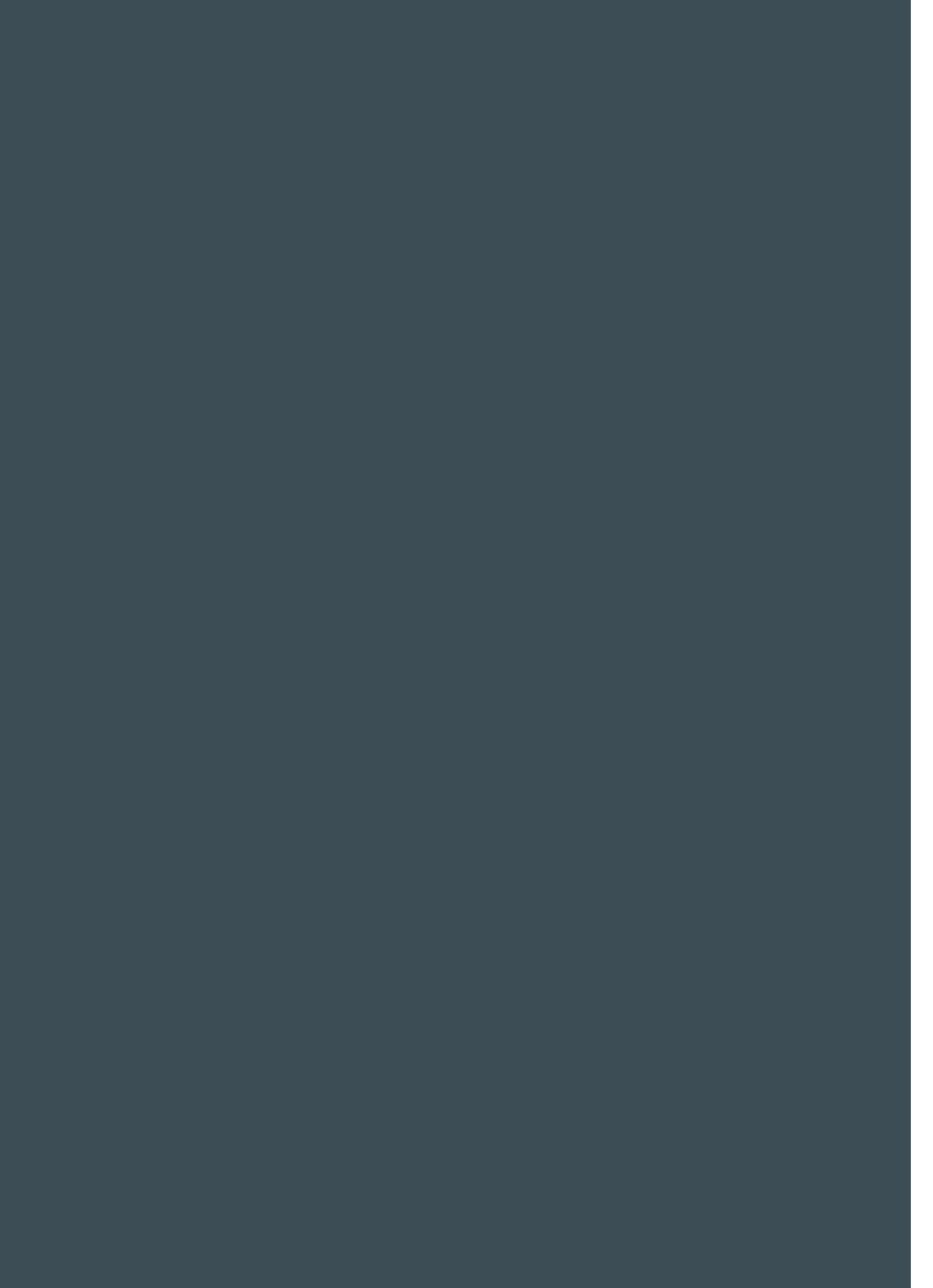
TONY EVANS

LifeWay | Guys

PRESENTED TO

FROM

DATE



NO MORE EXCUSES

90-DAY DEVOTIONAL FOR TEEN GUYS

TONY EVANS

LifeWay Press®
Nashville, Tennessee

EDITORIAL TEAM
STUDENT MINISTRY
PUBLISHING

BEN TRUEBLOOD

Director, Student Ministry

JOHN PAUL BASHAM

Manager, Student
Ministry Publishing

KAREN DANIEL

Editorial Team Leader

SCOTT LATTA

Content Editor

MORGAN HAWK

Production Editor

AMY LYON

Graphic Designer

Material in this resource is adapted from *No More Excuses*, © 2017 Tony Evans. Published by Crossway Publishers. Used by permission.

Devotional content adapted from existing material developed by Dr. Tony Evans with Heather Hair.

© 2020 LifeWay Press®

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted in writing by the publisher. Requests for permission should be addressed in writing to LifeWay Press®; One LifeWay Plaza; Nashville, TN 37234.

ISBN 978-1-0877-1989-4 • Item 005826979
Dewey Decimal 248.842

Subject headings: CHRISTIAN LIFE/YOUTH/
DEVOTIONAL

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible® and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

Scripture quotations marked (NIV) are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com. The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

Scripture quotations marked (ESV) are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

To order additional copies of this resource, write to LifeWay Resources Customer Service; One LifeWay Plaza; Nashville, TN 37234; fax 615-251-5933; call toll free 800-458-2772; order online at LifeWay.com; or email orderentry@lifeway.com.

Printed in the United States of America.

Student Ministry Publishing • LifeWay Resources
One LifeWay Plaza • Nashville, TN 37234

CONTENTS

No More Leaving Jesus Behind . . .	11
No More Living in the Past	37
No More Feeling Worthless	63
No More Immorality	87
No More Playing the Lone Ranger	111
No More Ownership	135
No More Clock Punching	159
No More Half-Stepping	183





《ABOUT THE AUTHOR》

Dr. Tony Evans is the founder and senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, founder and president of The Urban Alternative, former chaplain of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks, and author of over 100 books, booklets, and Bible studies. The first African American to earn a doctorate of theology from Dallas Theological Seminary, he has been named one of the 12 Most Effective Preachers in the English-Speaking World by Baylor University. Dr. Evans holds the honor of writing and publishing the first full-Bible commentary and study Bible by an African American.

His radio broadcast, The Alternative with Dr. Tony Evans, can be heard on more than 1,400 US outlets daily and in more than 130 countries.

Dr. Evans launched the Tony Evans Training Center in 2017, an online learning platform providing quality seminary-style courses for a fraction of the cost to any person in any place. The goal is to increase Bible literacy not only in lay people, but also in those Christian leaders who cannot afford nor find the time for formal ongoing education.

Dr. Tony Evans was married to his late wife Lois for nearly 50 years. They are the proud parents of four, grandparents of thirteen, and great-grandparents of two.

For more information, visit TonyEvans.org.

《INTRODUCTION》

Today's generation of men suffers from "loser's limp."

Anyone who has competed in sports knows what I mean by "loser's limp." It's what sometimes happens when an outfielder misjudges a fly ball and misses the catch or when a wide receiver drops an easy pass. He falls to the ground and gets up limping. The purpose of the limp is to camouflage the failure. The impression he wants to give his teammates and the fans is that he didn't make the catch because of a cramp, a muscle pull, or some other sudden malady of the leg rather than a misjudgment. So the limp becomes the athlete's excuse, his attempt to be exonerated of blame for his misplay.


But while the consequences of a misplay in a ball game are relatively small, the unfortunate fact is that many men have developed a "loser's limp" when it comes to life. Instead of owning up to their failures and responsibilities, they excuse them, giving the impression that forces beyond their control are responsible for their circumstances.

It's true that circumstances beyond our control can sometimes make it difficult for us to be all that God wants for us to be. But we need to start looking at these circumstances as challenges and opportunities for success rather than excuses for failure or not

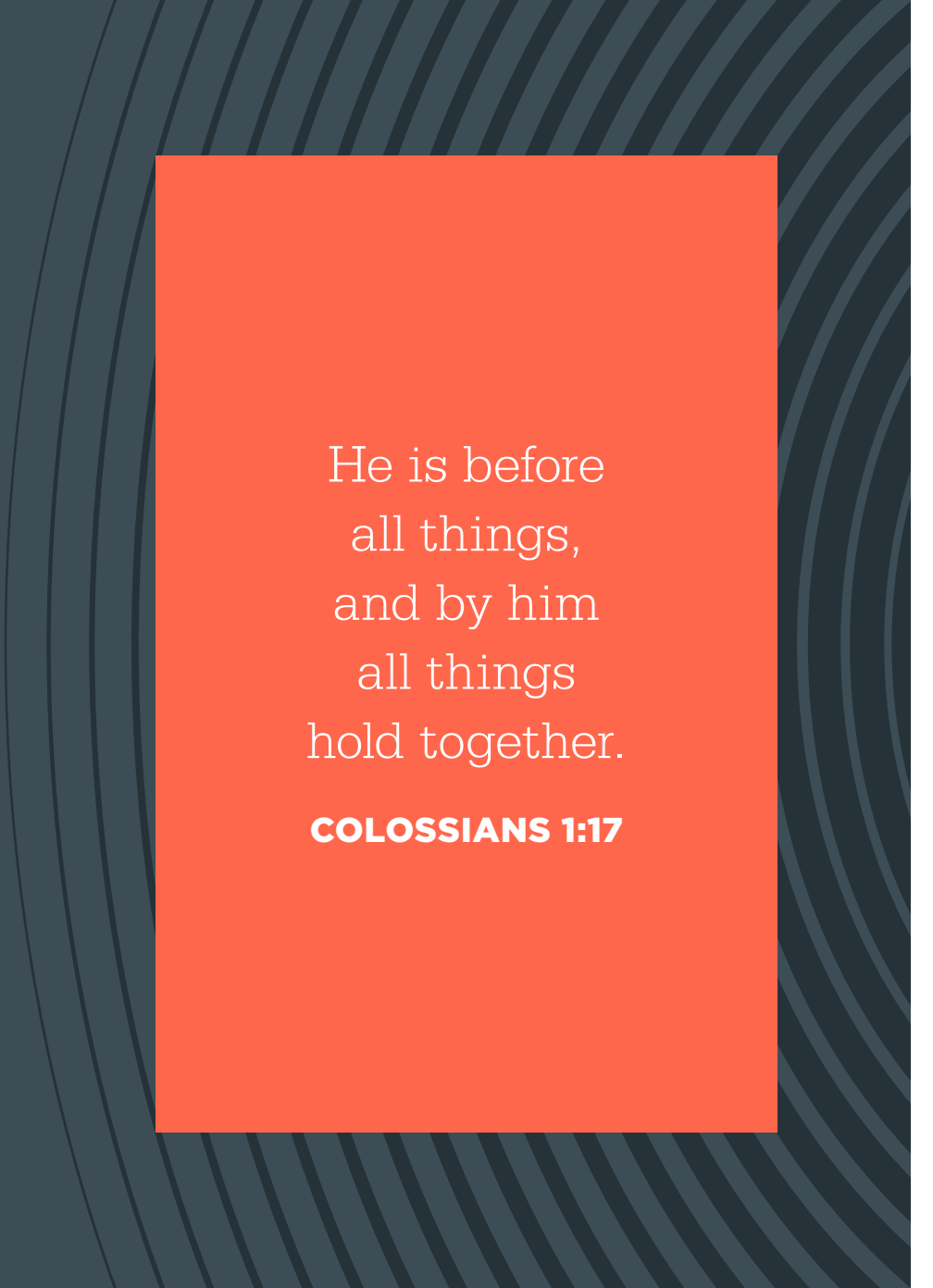
doing anything. It's high time that we stop blaming circumstances, pressures, or challenges and start living as real men.

Now, I'm not saying that real men just leap over every obstacle like Superman. No, we all stumble and fall. But being real men means we don't let our past control our present and define our future by coming up with a "limp" to hide our sins and mistakes. Instead, we accept responsibility for our actions, identify what needs to be corrected, and set about being the men God has created and called us to be.

That's what this book is all about. It's about Christian men repudiating the "loser's limp" and becoming real men of God. It's about men winning back their families, their churches, and their culture by rising above their circumstances through the grace and power of God. It's about men finding purpose, meaning, and direction for their lives despite past setbacks or present pressures. It's about becoming men of character, commitment, power, and influence for Jesus Christ.



**NO MORE
LEAVING
JESUS
BEHIND**

The background of the entire image consists of concentric circles in various shades of blue and grey, creating a ripple effect. A solid orange rectangle is centered on this background, containing the text.

He is before
all things,
and by him
all things
hold together.

COLOSSIANS 1:17

GET TO KNOW JESUS

To become the man God designed you to be, you must have a relationship with Jesus. Without Jesus, we have no chance of understanding God. The Bible says, “No one has ever seen God. The one and only Son, who is himself God and is at the Father’s side—he has revealed him” (John 1:18). How does God make Himself known? He does so through Jesus.

Knowing Jesus personally radically changes your life. Merely knowing *about* Him doesn’t do much good. In order to truly know Jesus Christ, you must experience Him personally. You must abide with Him—hang out in His presence, feel His heartbeat, and discover what brings Him pleasure and what He wants to do with, in, and through you.

Jesus has a plan for you. If you want to know your purpose, then get to know the One who knows it best. The closer you get to Jesus, the closer you are to experiencing and fulfilling what you were created to do.

- **Do you know Jesus personally, or do you merely know about Him? What’s the difference?**

In the beginning
was the Word,
and the Word
was with God,
and the Word
was God.

JOHN 1:1

HOW GOD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN

Jesus revealed everything about God that God wished for us to know. He is the complete revelation of God Himself. That's why you can't go around Jesus and get to God. He is the only begotten Son. Buddha, Muhammad, Confucius—not these men nor any other prophet, teacher, or king can make that claim. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

The most unique person in human history—God in the flesh—deserves the highest place in our priorities. He should be our everything. As the earth revolves around the sun, so Christ should be the center of our existence.

When you give all of yourself to Jesus, He is there returning all of Himself to you. The power that created the universe is the same power that can strengthen you to grow, change, and experience unspeakable satisfaction.

- **How would you describe your relationship with Jesus? What improvements would you like to see?**

For all have
sinned
and fall short
of the glory
of God.

ROMANS 3:23

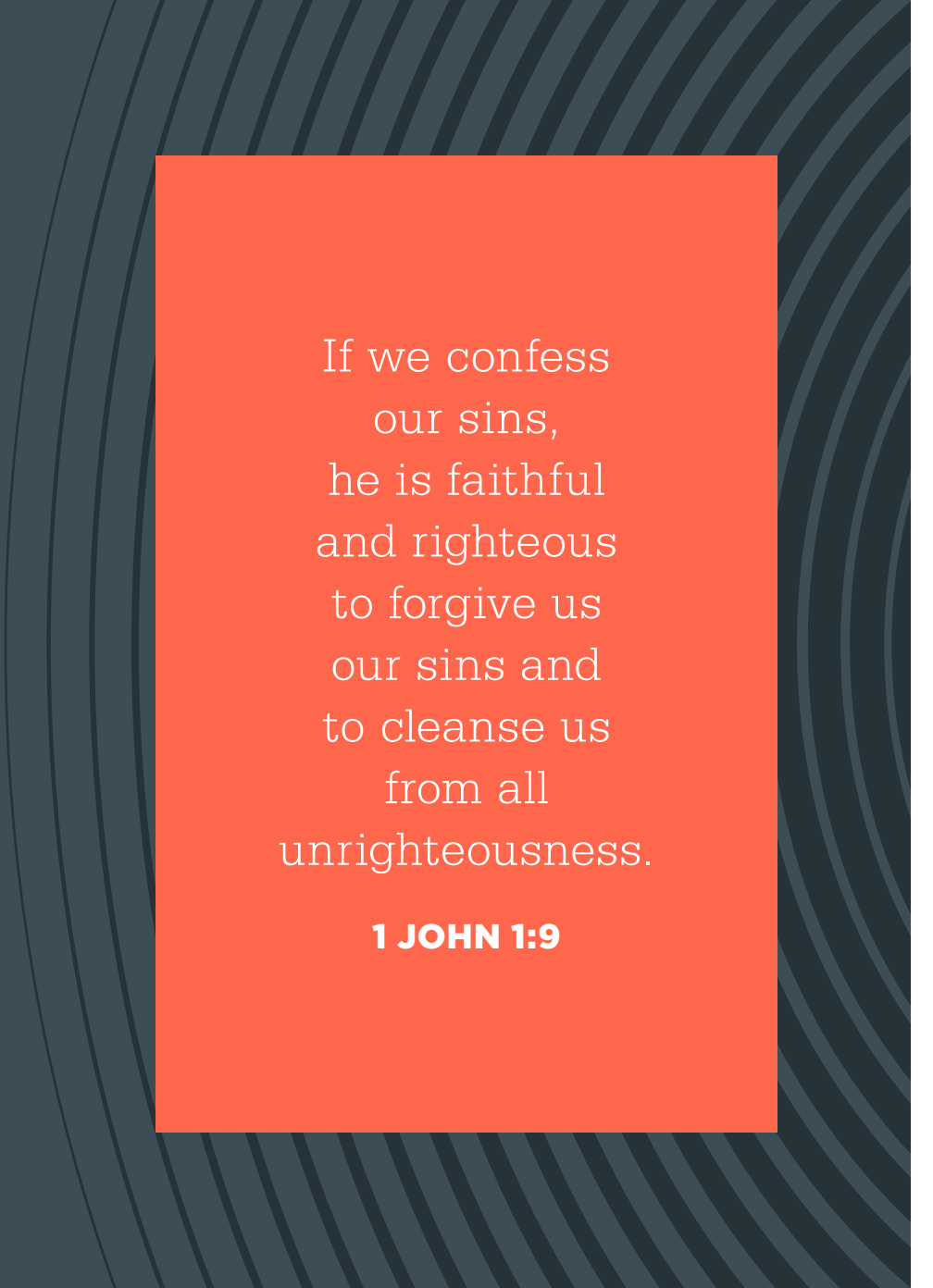
INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

The Book of 1 John expresses the meaning of fellowship with God and our need for this intimate, interpersonal relationship with Him. But the apostle John wants us to know that God doesn't lower His perfect standards so that we can have fellowship with Him. The slightest imperfection is unacceptable to a holy God, and we, even on our best days, fall far short of perfection. Since God can't reduce His righteous standards, John says:

If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 JOHN 1:7

God shows us the good, the bad, and the ugly in our lives. When God exposes those things in our lives that are offensive to Him, He deals with that sin, and our fellowship with Him can proceed.

- **How do you respond when God reveals sin in your life?**

The background of the image consists of a series of concentric, slightly irregular circles in various shades of blue and grey, creating a ripple effect. In the center, there is a solid orange rectangle containing the text.

If we confess
our sins,
he is faithful
and righteous
to forgive us
our sins and
to cleanse us
from all
unrighteousness.

1 JOHN 1:9

WHEN WE DO SIN

Intimate fellowship with God is possible because of the advocacy of the work of Christ. He is the reason we can commune with God and know Him intimately. Our God isn't a distant God. He is up close and personal because of what Jesus Christ did here on earth and is doing for us now as He intercedes for us in heaven. The apostle John says:

My little children, I am writing you these things so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the righteous one. He himself is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world. 1 JOHN 2:1-2

We are sinners who have been made new in Christ and should strive to be like Him in all things. But when we do sin, we can be reconciled to God because of Jesus.

- **What sins are hindering your fellowship with the Father? How can you pray today for God to reveal them to you?**

He humbled
himself by
becoming obedient
to the point of
death—even to
death on a cross.

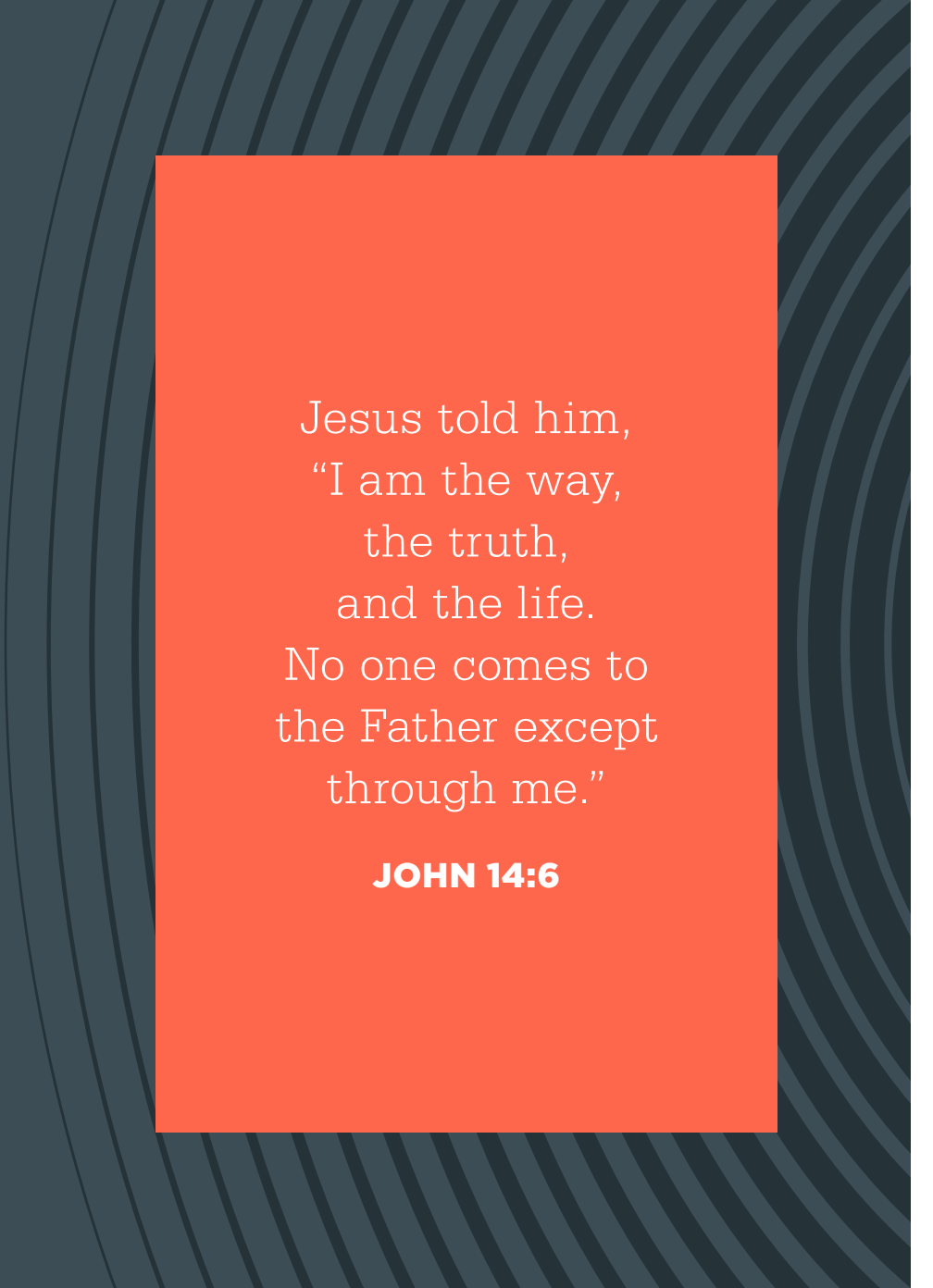
PHILIPPIANS 2:8

JESUS OUR ADVOCATE

Jesus is our Advocate. Advocate is a legal term, meaning “someone who helps.” The idea presented through the word *advocate* is that Jesus Christ is representing us in God’s courtroom. When we sin, we are guilty of a crime against God. We must enter a plea, so we confess, “Guilty, Your Honor.” But then our Deliverer, Jesus Christ, speaks up on our behalf, pleading our case through the blood of His own sacrifice on the cross.

In His advocacy, Jesus diverts the wrath of God—He takes the punishment we deserve. “He is the propitiation of our sins” (1 John 2:2, ESV). Propitiation is one of those big theological words that means “satisfaction of the demands of a deity with an acceptable course of action.” Jesus is not only our Advocate, speaking up for us in court, but He also offers Himself to receive our penalty. Understanding that Jesus took the penalty for our sin should influence our love for Him and serve as motivation to obey Him.

- **Jesus took the punishment for your sins. Why was that necessary for us to have a relationship with God?**

The background of the image consists of a series of concentric circles in a dark blue-grey color, creating a ripple effect that fills the entire frame. In the center of this background is a solid orange rectangle. Inside this rectangle, the text is displayed in a white, serif font, centered horizontally and vertically.

Jesus told him,
“I am the way,
the truth,
and the life.
No one comes to
the Father except
through me.”

JOHN 14:6

NO OTHER NAME

Modern culture is quick to teach that there are many paths to God, but that isn't true. The Bible says of Jesus, "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). This passage makes clear beyond a doubt that God's only Son, Jesus, is the only way to salvation.

But why did God extend the salvation invitation to all mankind and then make the road to heaven narrow? It was because the payment of our sin had to be wholly acceptable to Him, the sacrifice had to be sinless—like God Himself—in order to satisfy Him. Jesus is the only one who never sinned and therefore He was the only one who could save us.

Mankind needed a way to atone for sin once and for all, but the only one who could be an adequate sacrifice for sin was God. For mankind to be saved, God had to be the Savior. There is only one path to God—and the path is Jesus.

- **What are some of the ways culture tells us we can reach God? Why did God make Jesus the only way?**

But whoever keeps
his word, truly
in him the
love of God
is made complete.

This is how we
know we are in him:

The one who says
he remains in him
should walk just
as he walked.

1 JOHN 2:5-6

THE KEY TO INTIMACY

Because God shows us mercy, we can draw close to Him and enjoy His presence. We can know Him better as our Father. But what does God require of us in order for us to receive this level of intimacy? The Scripture says, “This is how we know that we know him: if we keep his commands” (1 John 2:3).

He requires our obedience. Obedience rooted in love—that’s how we receive ongoing, developing, ever-deepening fellowship with the Lord. When we walk in His light, we see the areas of disobedience in our lives, and we begin the process of adjusting them in obedience to God.

Our intimacy with God is in direct proportion to our obedience to Him. We can’t habitually disobey God and expect to enjoy a vibrant relationship with Him. When we have fellowship with Christ, we become more like Him from spending time with Him. In response, we walk like He walks, and our lives reflect Him. In order to grow in intimacy with God, we must obey Him.

- **How would you describe your level of obedience to God and His Word?**

For the grace of God
has appeared, bringing
salvation for all people,
instructing us to deny
godlessness and worldly
lusts and to live in a
sensible, righteous, and
godly way in the present
age, while we wait for
the blessed hope, the
appearing of the glory
of our great God and
Savior, Jesus Christ.

TITUS 2:11-13

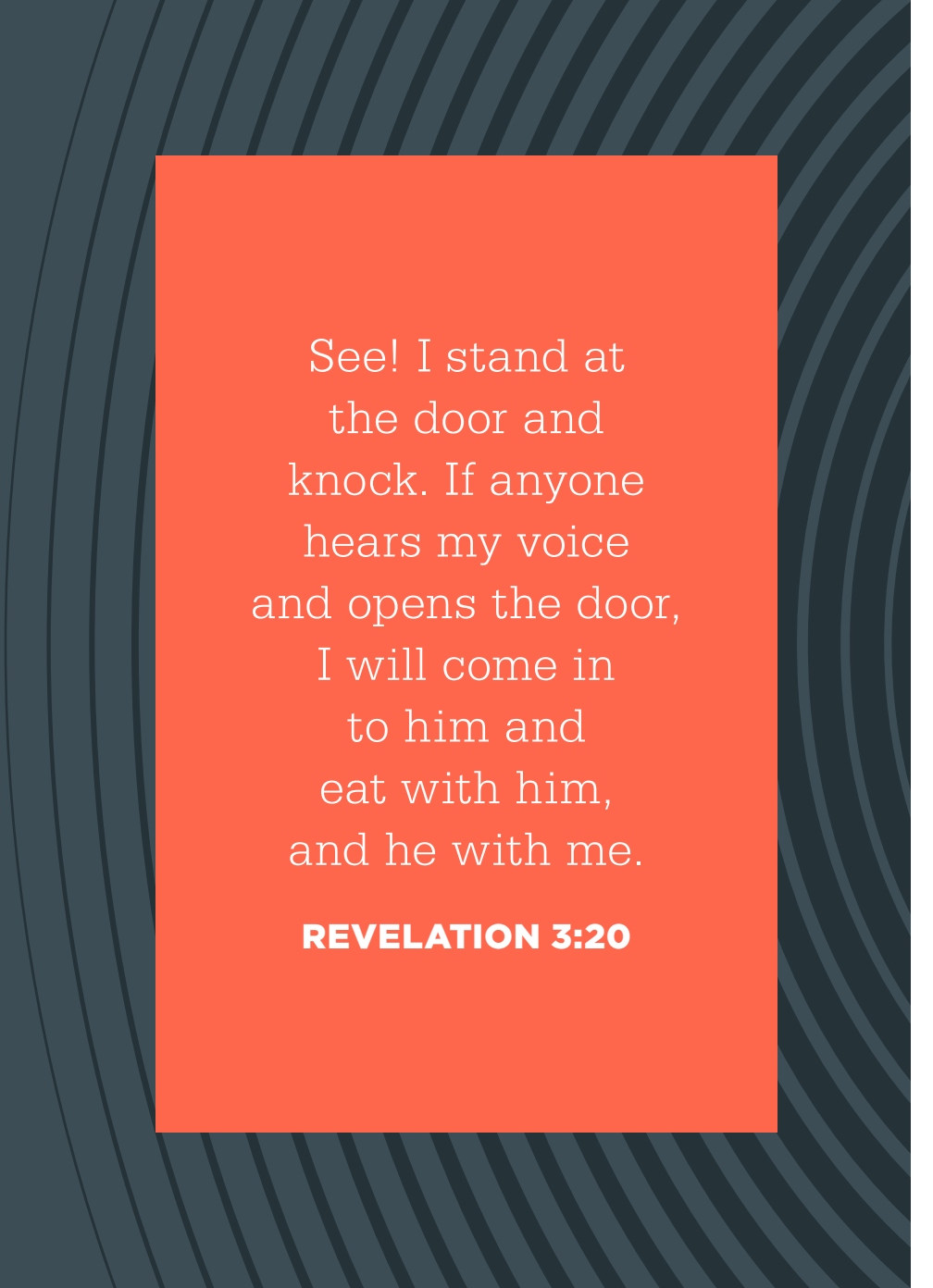
BUILT-IN DISCIPLINE

Following Jesus not only brings you into abundant life, it brings you into a new program of personal discipline. Maybe you struggle with committing to a regular quiet time, or find it difficult to read your Bible and go to church regularly.

These spiritual disciplines that bring us closer to Jesus are built into the grace of God. By His grace, God supplies whatever you lack in order to get you where He wants you to go. God has already taken your limitations and humanity into account in supplying you with His grace. But you must move forward in faith, trusting God to supply the grace you need exactly when you need it.

It's the Holy Spirit's job to provide for us the measure of grace we need to move us along toward spiritual maturity as we live in dependence on God. The Holy Spirit is a built-in "power pack" who enables and empowers us to become more like Christ.

- **What role does the Holy Spirit play in our relationship with God?**

The background of the entire image consists of concentric circles in various shades of blue and grey, creating a ripple effect. A solid orange rectangle is centered on this background, containing the text.

See! I stand at
the door and
knock. If anyone
hears my voice
and opens the door,
I will come in
to him and
eat with him,
and he with me.

REVELATION 3:20

PURSUING A PERSON

As Christians, we have the jaw-dropping opportunity to know Jesus well. A common mistake people make in their spiritual lives is they pursue a program rather than pursuing a person. If you read your Bible and pray because that's what good Christian men are supposed to do, you are just fulfilling a program. But Jesus didn't die for a program, and no program is your Savior.

When you have a passion for a person, you don't have a problem with a program. You don't read the Bible because your pastor tells you you're supposed to, but because you want to meet the Author. You don't get on your knees because good Christian men pray, but because you want to talk to your divine connection.

If you pursue Christ as a person you are in love with, you find the grace of God giving you power to pull off the program of God. The program is simply a means of grace intended to point you to Christ.

- **What difference would it make if you approached the spiritual disciplines as a means of pursuing Jesus?**

If anyone comes
to me and does
not hate his
own father and
mother, wife and
children, brothers
and sisters—
yes, and even his
own life—he cannot
be my disciple.

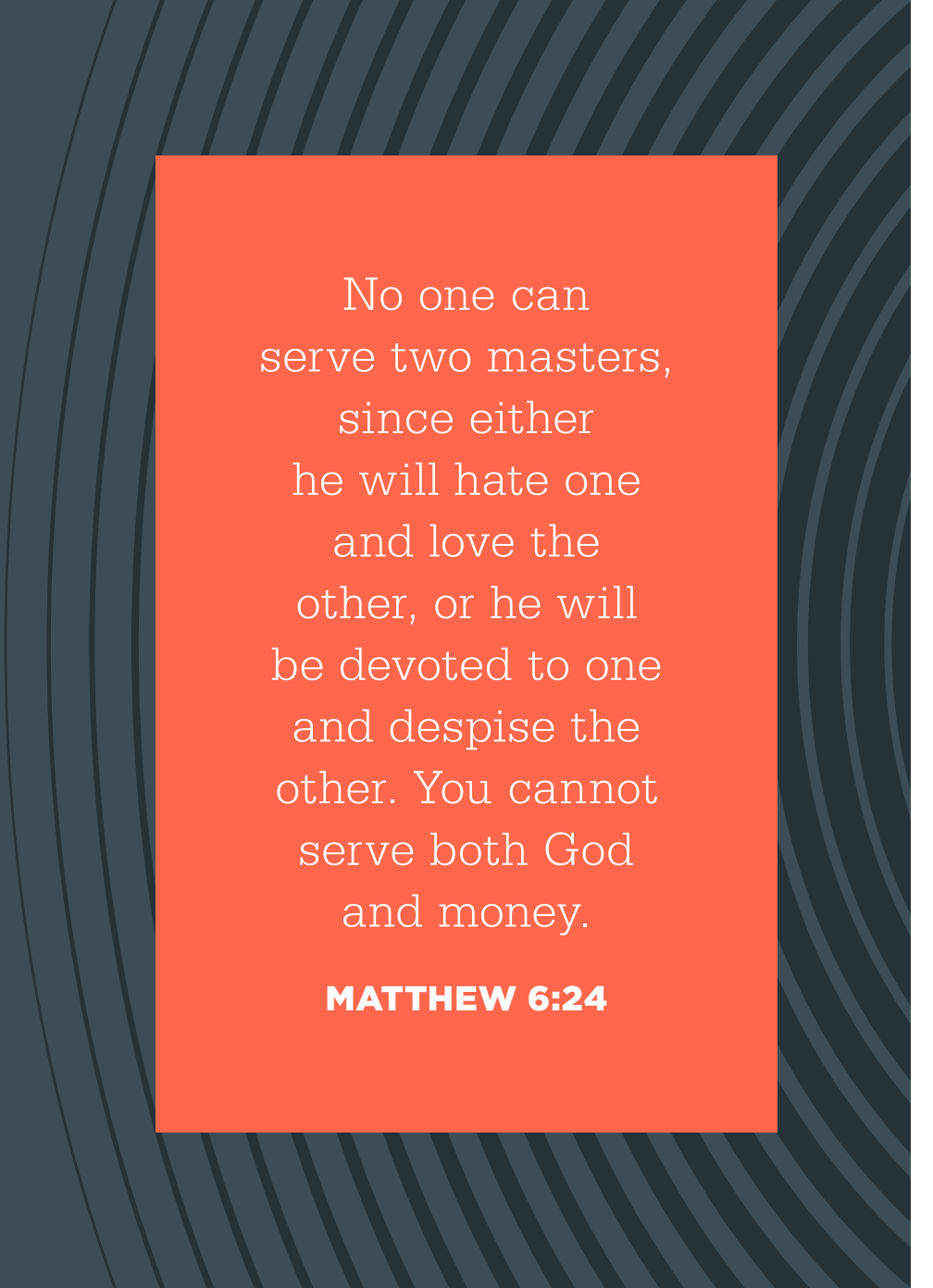
LUKE 14:26

CARRY YOUR CROSS

If we aren't careful, it's possible to make an idol of personal comfort, but that shouldn't be the case for a Christ-follower. Jesus said, "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:27). You must carry your own cross, not Jesus' cross. He took care of His own.

We have some messed-up ideas about what it means to carry our crosses. Difficult teachers, coaches who ride you, friends who let you down—none of those things is a cross. So, what does it mean to carry your cross? To carry your cross means to bear the weight of Jesus' sacrifice. It is to be so identified with Him that when they accuse you of being a Christian, you say, "I am guilty." To carry your cross is to admit publicly that you are guilty of the crime of being committed to Christ, guilty of placing Him first. It means committing our lives to Christ no matter the cost and if necessary, being willing to forfeit personal comfort to obey Him.

- **What are you willing to give up to follow Jesus?**



No one can
serve two masters,
since either
he will hate one
and love the
other, or he will
be devoted to one
and despise the
other. You cannot
serve both God
and money.

MATTHEW 6:24

MORE IMPORTANT THAN POSSESSIONS

There's nothing wrong with owning things, but a Christ-follower must love Jesus more than any personal possession. Jesus said, "In the same way, therefore, every one of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

This always upsets people. "You mean I have to give up my car, my phone, my money?" Yes. Did you expect me to say *no*? I say *yes*, we must give up these things if they become possessions.

The problem is not having something. The problem is *possessing* it. To possess something means that I hold on to it so tightly that nothing other than God can pry it loose from me. If we love something more than we love God, it's time to get rid of it. You can't possess your possessions and expect to possess Christ, too. The Bible makes it clear we will have to choose between our love for God and love of possessions.

- **What are you possessing that is at risk of becoming an idol? How can you pray about it today?**

My Father
is glorified by
this: that you
produce much fruit
and prove to be
my disciples.

JOHN 15:8

REMAINING IN CHRIST

In order to be like Jesus and become a man of no more excuses, we need to know Him. He is our Savior and our King, and He should be the focal point of our lives. We are fooling ourselves if we think we can make any progress without Him. Jesus put it this way:

I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me. JOHN 15:5

Did you catch that? Jesus didn't say we couldn't do some things without Him. He said we can do *nothing* without Him. But if we remain in Christ we will be effective disciples who produce much fruit. Living under the lordship of Jesus Christ demands that we put Jesus first and follow Him as His disciples—men with no more excuses as to why Jesus isn't front and center in our lives.

- **What practices can you put in place to make sure Jesus remains the focal point of your life?**